

HIGHGROUND

COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

**Colorado
Guardsmen
deployed since
Jan. 1, 2010:**

**738 Army
20 Air**



Commemorative issue



**Colorado Guard
celebrates 150 years**

**Colorado Guardsmen
continue the fight**

**Veteran of 3 wars
tells his tale**

February 2010

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Cover photo by Air Force Capt. Darin Overstreet
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

PUBLICATION STAFF



COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

6848 S. Revere Pkwy.
Centennial, CO 80112-3904

MAJ. GEN. H. MICHAEL EDWARDS
The Adjutant General
MAJ. ELENA O'BRYAN
State Public Affairs Officer
MAJ. RENEE CUNNINGHAM
Chief of Public Affairs, Joint Staff
CAPT. DARIN OVERSTREET
Deputy PAO, Joint Staff
1ST LT. ANTHONY NORRIS
Commander, 104th PAD
CAPT. MICHAEL ODGERS
Public Affairs Officer, COARNG

CAPT. NICOLE DAVD
CAPT. KRISTIN HALEY
Public Affairs Officers, COANG
MAJ. LAURA KENNEY
*Chief of Public Affairs,
100th MDB*
MASTER SGT. CHERESA D. THEIRAL
Editor-in-Chief
DEBORAH GRIGSBY SMITH
Associate Editor
STAFF SGT. NICOLE MANZANARES
Layout Editor/Graphic Artist

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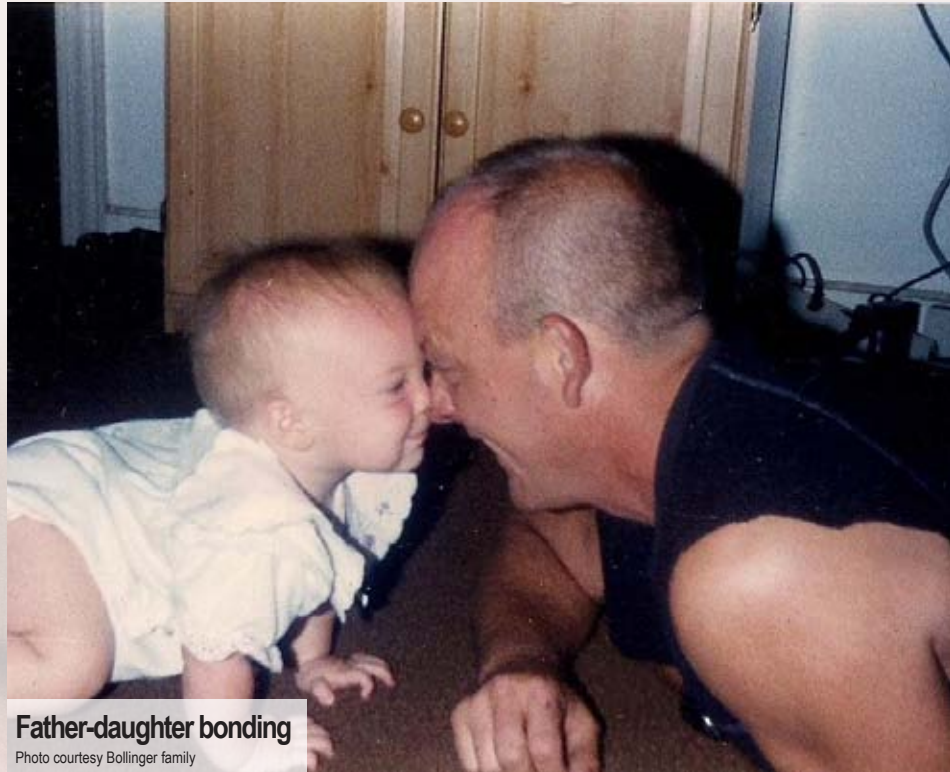
A daughter's view:

My dad's deployments

By Kaitlin Bollinger, age 15

The following essay was written by the daughter of one of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade (Ground-based Midcourse Defense's) most well-known Soldiers, Sgt. 1st Class Harold Bollinger, who was with the unit for many years, in multiple capacities. He served as a crew member, unit training noncommissioned officer, family readiness liaison NCO and fundraiser, to name but a few. He is now serving at Fort Carson, Colo., with the Regimental Training Institute as a Warrior Leader Course instructor. We publish his daughter's musings on how it feels to be a family member of a National Guard Soldier – always subject to deployment – to both honor him and remind all of us to cherish our families and our freedoms.

~ 100th MDB(GMD) Public Affairs Office



Father-daughter bonding


Photo courtesy Bollinger family

It was early in the morning and dark outside with only street lights shining through the trees. I could almost smell the dew on the leaves and feel the moisture in the air. It was cold outside to the point where my teeth were chattering. My dad picked me up to keep me warm. I could not understand why my whole family had gotten up so early to go stand next to a tall, chain-link fence. Most of my family was crying, and all I remember anyone saying was my dad, in a calm, soothing voice, "Don't worry, I'll be home soon."

We stood there for a time that felt like an eternity until my dad put me down and picked up a large green duffle bag and gave my mom a kiss. I remember riding home thinking, "I don't understand what is happening." I soon realized my dad was deployed for a long time and that meant he would be missing Christmas, my birthday and every holiday in between. When he

came back, I remember making signs to welcome him home and standing in the airport terminal waiting for his arrival.

A few short weeks later near his birthday, I remember him packing a suitcase and me asking, "Where are you going daddy?" His always calm voice answered, "It's just in case." A few days later he left again and that meant that he would be missing many more holidays and other events in my life.

Soon it was the new millennium and finally my family was whole again. That is, until one day I again found myself outside that same chain-link fence that was not so tall now but in every way as painful. This time both my dad and brother were carrying the same duffle bags. This time I was determined not to cry, because crying would not unpack their bags and soaking in my tears would not make them stay. They eventually came home safely ... but my dad still has a suitcase packed in his closet. 

Saying farewell

Military police head to Afghanistan



Friends and family say goodbye to 150 Soldiers of Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 193rd Military Police Battalion, Colorado Army National Guard, during the unit's departure ceremony at the Douglas County Fairground's Special Event Center Jan. 24. The Soldiers are heading to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Nicole Manzanares

By Army Capt. Michael Odgers
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

CASTLE ROCK, Colo. (1/24/10) – The Douglas County Fairground Special Events Center was filled to near capacity as friends, family and well wishers said goodbye to approximately 150 Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 193rd Military Police Battalion.

The Colorado Army National Guard unit is heading to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The departure ceremony began with a community band marching in front of the Soldiers. The music was barely heard over the cheering crowd. As Soldiers entered the packed events center, they were flanked by members of the Patriot Guard Riders bearing American flags.

"You are the finest of Colorado's Citizen-Soldiers. You are ambassadors in all that you do, and I know you are well led," said Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards, The Adjutant General of Colorado. "God speed. Best wishes. We've got your back."

"On this journey you will come back stronger and better but it's up to you. You have to be resilient," said Col. Christopher Petty, commander of the 89th Troop Command, the MP battalion's higher headquarters.


Col. Dana M. Capozzella, Colorado Army National

Guard commander, said that seeing these Soldiers leave felt to her as if it were her own family who was leaving. "I truly believe the MPs have the best esprit de corps and morale. I have full faith in you," she said.

"The support that is here is overwhelming. The support we receive is critical to our mission. Without it we couldn't do what we do," said 193rd MP Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Laura Clellan. "This is the best group of Soldiers I have ever worked with and I am positive we are going to do a good job."

The ceremony concluded with the casing of the unit's colors, symbolizing their departure to a new theater of operations, followed by the retirement of the American flag by members of the Aurora and Lakewood Police departments serving as the color guard.

Soldiers will serve as the command and control element of Task Force Rocky Mountain, a joint unit comprised of Army and Navy personnel who are tasked with providing care and custody of detainees, with dignity and respect.

The unit consists of Soldiers who drill at readiness centers in Denver and Cañon City, Colo. The Soldiers' next stop is Fort Bliss, Texas, to train on specific theater mission requirements, as well as culture and language, prior to heading to Afghanistan. 

The Family Unit



By Cheryl Montgomery
Colorado National Guard Family Programs

The 'Granny Phone' scam

A popular telephone scam known as the "Granny Phone Scam" has recently targeted new Colorado National Guard enlistees who have just shipped off to basic training. The scam was first uncovered by fraud experts in March 2009 and continues to target the unsuspecting elderly family of young military members. The perpetrators have amassed a database of information on senior citizens from their grandchildren's internet social pages and use this information to contact their victims.

One family, who requested their names remain private, are recent CONG victims of this scam. Their son shipped to basic training in November 2009. During Thanksgiving week, and nearly three states from their son's training site, the young Soldier's unsuspecting grandmother received a phone call. A distraught voice claimed he was her grandson. The caller explained that over the holiday weekend, a Thanksgiving pass had been given to basic trainees at his base, he and a buddy headed north to Canada where they went out drinking, crashed their car and ended up in a Canadian jail. The increasingly desperate voice asked for cash to get out of jail, fix the broken car and to get back to base before he would be listed as AWOL – absent without leave. The 81-year-old grandmother repeatedly told him to contact his parents in Colorado, but the voice continued to tug at her vulnerabilities as both a grandmother and supportive family member of the new Soldier. Tom, the grandmother eventually hung up the phone, still uncertain as to the safety and whereabouts of her grandson.

Fortunately, the grandmother did not send the money. She contacted the Soldier's parents who then began to call to confirm their son's safety. The Soldier's mother knew that the alleged actions were completely unlike her son's character. "Our son would do nothing like this. We knew nothing about a Thanksgiving break, and even if they had one he would never get into this sort of trouble," she said after hearing of the scam. The father is a retired Guard member and their other son is a current member of the Colorado Army National Guard. The family knew that the phone call could not be true, but couldn't help but be concerned. As a precaution, they contacted the training base and confirmed that there was no Thanksgiving pass.

After talking with other individuals associated with the military, the father was appalled to hear that this scam was well known. In some cases, the individuals would even finish the story down to the details of the Canadian location. "My mother-in-law is 81 years old. She luckily did not give any money, but there are others that will," said the father.

Numerous Web sites have reported that the scam involves millions of dollars obtained from the retirement accounts of innocent seniors. The perpetrators are social engineers appearing to

have all the answers and are capable of using information gathered from a phone call and using it against their victims. Multiple scenarios are used in their calls, but all incidents of the "Granny Scam" include a request to send a cash loan to Canada, where fraud experts report that the scam is based.

It can sometimes be difficult to decipher between a real emergency and a scam, especially when the call involves your loved one with whom you have little communication due to military assignments. If you or your family suspects a fraudulent phone call, the following are the precautions you can take:

- **Ask for a call back number. If it is a legitimate emergency the caller should have no problem giving you the telephone number.**
- **Delay making an immediate decision. Tell the caller you need to confirm the availability of the requested funds.**
- **If you have internet access, and caller ID, you can use Google to verify if the telephone number and the address match. By typing the area code and telephone number in the Google search box, the search results will generally list the name and address associated with that telephone number if it is a land line.**
- ***69 the call. After obtaining the information from the caller, wait a few minutes and press *69 on your telephone touch pad. This will redial the last telephone number that called your telephone. You do not need to say anything – just listen to the voice and the background.**
- **Report the scam. The Colorado Attorney General provides the following information to report telephone scams:**

Phone Busters

Box 686


North Bay, Ontario P1B8J8

Phone: 1-888-495-8501

Fax: 1-888-654-9426

E-mail: info@phonebusters.com

Phone Busters is operated by the Ontario Provincial Police and facilitates prosecution by United States agencies against violators of the Competition Act, a federal law that makes telephone scamming a crime. They also educate the public about specific crimes as well as collect and disseminate victim evidence, documentation, statistics and tape recordings to outside investigations.

By reporting the scam, one can help ongoing investigations that may lead to the prosecution of perpetrators and prevent another Guard family from falling victim to a crime that preys on the love and support of distant soldiers. 

200th Airlift Squadron

desert-bound

By Air Force Capt. Kristin Haley
140th Wing Public Affairs



PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. (1/10/10) – For the first time ever, the 200th Airlift Squadron is deploying to Al Udieh, Qatar with 35 percent of its pilots.

The LearJet C-21 pilots volunteered to alleviate some of the deployment strain on its active duty sister unit, the 311th Airlift Squadron.

“Over the past couple of years, we’ve really become more integrated with the active duty Air Force,” said Lt. Col. Paul Follett, 200th Airlift Squadron commander. The 200th AS falls under the 140th Wing, Colorado Air National Guard.

In 2006, the unit established an Inter-fly Agreement with the 311th AS, a C-21 active-duty squadron, which is also a tenant unit located at Peterson Air Force Base. “We really want to support the active-duty mission and be a part

of the C-21 community. Part of that full support includes deploying,” he added.

Although the 200th AS is the smallest C-21 unit in both the active duty and Guard, it has some of the most experienced pilots.

Active duty pilots generally leave three-year C-21 assignments with an average of 1,100 flying hours per pilot. In addition, according to pilots, – the 200th, as a whole, has more hours than any other airlift squadron in the Guard or active duty. In 30 years, they’ve accumulated more than 67,462 hours – more than seven and a half years of non-stop flight.

In addition to the overall hours the 200th AS has to be proud of, it is also home of the pilot with the most hours overall. Lt. Col. Dave Smallidge has more than 8,000 hours to his name. He joined the Colorado Air



A Colorado Air National Guard C-21 from the 200th Airlift Squadron, and two F-15 Strike Eagles, perform a mission near Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, Aug. 15.

Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Shane Heiser

A C-21 from the 200th Airlift Squadron sits on the ramp at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado.

Air Force photo by Capt. Kristin Haley



Colorado Air National Guard Lt. Col. Jim Lawrence and Lt. Col. Charles McDowell, 200th Airlift Squadron pilots, have more than 12,000 hours of combined flying time.

Air Force photo by Capt. Kristin Haley

National Guard in 1999 after spending time in both the active duty and the Reserve. “My career started out good, got better and now it’s the best,” he said.

The squadron flies distinguished visitor airlift and time-critical cargo missions for Transportation Command’s Joint Operational Support Airlift Center, as well as air defense operational training sorties and other airlift missions for the National Guard Bureau.

“Although many of our flights are to the same places such as Andrews Air Force Base, what makes our job so great is that we still get to go to places we’ve never been; places like Manhattan, Kan., and small airports all over the U.S.,” said Follett.

With so much experience in one squadron, the

unit is known as the “go-to” place for corporate knowledge. “We like to think of ourselves as the safehold of knowledge in the C-21 community,” said Maj. Joel Miller, 200th AS pilot.

Over the years, pilots have supplemented a number of Inspector General teams; and administered standardization and evaluation check rides to units in Pacific Air Forces, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and multiple continental U.S. locations such as Andrews Air Force Base, Md., and Offutt Air Force Base, Neb. In addition, they’ve helped with flight reviews

at the Air Force level as well as checked out initial cadre when new C-21 units stood up in Fargo, N.D., and Bradley, Conn. The squadron also advises C-21 contract training conducted in Dallas, Texas.

A local Inter-Fly Agreement has allowed 200th AS pilots to spend a lot of time flying with many of the young lieutenants assigned to the 311th AS. “It’s mutually beneficial for us, too. However when we deploy, although we’ve done a lot of training recently to address the threats in theater, we’re definitely going to be learning from them. We’re excited about this opportunity and know it’s going to be a great experience for us,” said Follett.





When Malcolm met Martin

By Deborah Grigsby Smith
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

Critically acclaimed play ponders emotion, strategies, alchemy of American civil rights icons

Their lives were remarkably different, yet some say remarkably the same. While they both wanted equal rights for blacks, each stood on opposing sides of a racially charged philosophical line – one that would eventually find them both dead by an assassin's bullet.

But what if legendary civil rights leaders Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had met before they were each gunned down in public – just three years apart?

Interestingly enough, award winning playwright Jeff Stetson explores this very musing in a dramatic, one-act play based on an imagined, secret meeting between Malcolm X and Dr. King on Valentine's Day, 1965; one week before Malcolm X was

shot inside New York's famous Audubon Ballroom.

"The Meeting," a thought-provoking 90-minute play performed by Washington D.C.- based Pin Points Theatre, was part of the Colorado National Guard's 2010 observance of the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, as well as Black History Month.

"Discussions centered around racial issues are always very delicate topics, but they are topics we have to deal with in order to avoid mistakes of the past," said Colorado Air National Guard Maj. Anne Green, CONG State Equal Employment manager.

Green, who also oversees Colorado's Special Emphasis

Actor Corey Harris portrays Rashad, Malcolm X's mysterious bodyguard. Here, Rashad sits in a dimly-lit hotel room and contemplates the ramifications of a cryptic phone call to an unidentified source in "The Meeting".

Army photo by Deborah Grigsby Smith



Program, the organization that sponsored the performance, added “‘The Meeting’ is a marvelous tool that has helped us open doors for Soldiers and Airmen, as well as civilian employees, to examine the American Civil Rights movement through a social and historic lens.”

Both sons of Baptist ministers, Malcolm X and King played major roles in shaping America’s struggle for equality among blacks and whites. King, more reserved in his approach, gravitated to the peaceful, non-violent methods of civil disobedience in the fight against racial segregation.

Malcolm X, on the other hand, saw his role as that of “Witness for the prosecution against white America,” and was

far more radical in nature, advocating for complete separation of blacks and whites and encouraging black people use any means necessary to protect themselves.

The three-man production explores the dynamics between King, portrayed by veteran actor Shelby Wallace, and Malcolm X, portrayed by actor, playwright, and educational theatre founder Ersky Freeman. The play chews on what might have happened if Malcolm X and King had been able to meet outside the scorn of media attention, as well as what the two may have had to say to each other.

And while “The Meeting” is meant to serve as an educational platform for audience members, cast members readily admit their respective roles have also been moving experiences for them individually.

“I needed the lesson when I was younger,” recalled Freeman, who brings the tall, slender, and often-edgy Malcolm X to life. “I needed to know the very human side of Malcolm X, not the side that was demonized in the media.”

Freeman, who grew up during the civil rights movement himself, confessed personally his beliefs were more aligned with that of King’s, and having to put himself into a character that is so far removed from his own persona challenges him with each performance to understand the man – not just the role.

Wallace, who said he too has been cast in an opposite role, finds it difficult to contain his “inner Malcolm” as he plays Dr. King.

“I grew up more like him (Malcolm X), a rebel,” said Wallace, whose sturdy frame and polished voice are reminiscent of the Memphis-born King. “I had to get over the fact that I really didn’t care for the way Martin handled things, but having to portray King, I now understand what it must have been like for him to have to hold it in when all you want to do is just explode.”

Set inside a guest room at a Harlem hotel, “The Meeting” opens up an intimate and personal dialogue between the two influential men. Away from the damning lights of the media, Malcolm X and King speak frankly about each other’s shortcomings, as well as their hopes



Malcolm X (Ersky Freeman), foreground, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Shelby Wallace) step out on the balcony of a Harlem hotel room in “The Meeting,” a dramatic one-act play presented by Pin Points Theatre as part of the Colorado National Guard’s observance of Martin Luther King Day and Black History Month 2010. The play based on Jeff Stetson’s imagined meeting between the two iconic leaders in February 1965.

Army photo by Deborah Grigsby Smith



Malcolm X (Ersky Freeman) and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Shelby Wallace) grapple with their philosophical differences and take the civil rights struggle to the table in “The Meeting,” a dramatic one-act play presented by Pin Points Theatre based on an imagined meeting between the two iconic leaders in February 1965.

Army Photo by Deborah Grigsby Smith

for family and the future.

“An angry Martin and a crying Malcolm, who would have ever have thought?” chuckled Freeman.

Although more than 40 years have passed since Malcolm and King were assassinated, Green cautions their work is not done and the American Civil Rights movement is a living, breathing ideology that continues to evolve.

“The Civil Rights Act is still growing and has been amended as recently as 1991,” said Green. “And the Special Emphasis Programs are here to increase awareness and appreciation, and encourage us to better understand others as we live and work together.”

Special Emphasis Programs are implemented and observed to ensure minorities, women, people with various disabilities, and people with various sexual orientations are provided an equal opportunity in employment and program delivery activities. These programs improve the workplace environment by promoting and fostering diversity in the workplace through awareness and educating employees and others to appreciate, value, understand and celebrate social and cultural similarities and differences.


Several laws, Executive Orders, Public Law, federal regulations, Presidential Proclamations and orders, as well as Supreme Court decisions, have provided civil rights and Equal

Employment Opportunity protections in America. They apply to all Federal employees and provide the statutory basis for the Special Emphasis Program observances.

“I think if each person who was here today, could leave with a single message (from ‘The Meeting’) it would have to be that both movements were necessary to the success of the civil rights movement in America,” said a thoughtful Freeman. “Both the passive movement (of King) and the angry movement (of Malcolm X) were necessary to bring about change.”

Actor Corey Harris, who portrays Malcolm X’s twitchy yet enigmatic bodyguard, echoed Freeman’s thoughts, adding that almost anyone in the audience can relate to being frustrated and vulnerable at times “So I think it’s very easy to relate (to how Malcolm and King may have felt at the time).”

“I think it is just so important for all of us to embrace the inner personalities of these men within ourselves,” concluded Wallace. “Don’t be afraid to embrace your inner Martin and your inner Malcolm on your daily walk in life.”

Historically, Malcolm X and King actually did meet briefly in Washington D.C. – on March 26, 1964 at a press conference following a Senate hearing on the Civil Rights Bill. The meeting lasted only long enough for photographers to snap a photo of the two legendary figures. 

140th Airbu

sharpening the tip
of the spear



Airburst Range

By Air Force Capt. Kristin Haley
140th Wing Public Affairs



Joint Terminal Attack Controllers walk to one of the two training villages after calling in F-16 airstrikes. The two villages on the Airburst Range were created and built by its 12 unit members.

Air Force photo by Capt. Kristin Haley



Airburst Range members walk to one of the two training villages in preparation for a close air support scenario. The team acted as opposing forces for the 13th Air Support Operations Squadron's Joint Terminal Attack Controller training.

Air Force photo by Capt. Kristin Haley

FORT CARSON, Colo. (1/10/10) –140th Wing Airburst Range personnel recently facilitated their second scenario dedicated to training the 13th Air Support Operations Squadron (ASOS), Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTAC) in combat operations, similar to missions they will encounter in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Nicholas Heffron received his initial JTAC certification and will be using the skills he trained for in the next six months to support a battalion within the Army's 4th Infantry Division.

Although this was a JTAC-driven scenario, members of the Colorado Air National Guard's 140th Operations Support Squadron Airburst Range facilitated and supported the operation. They scheduled F-16 close air support from the New Mexico Air National Guard as well as controlled and deconflicted airspace. They also provided opposing force support and acted as insurgent forces, supplying realistic training aids such as smoke grenades and surface-to-air missile simulators.

"This is really our only opportunity to simulate real-life experiences we will encounter on the battlefield. Airburst Range provides the ability to simulate realist scenarios that mimic what we will really see in the AOR," said Tech. Sgt. Thomas C. Schaefer, a 13th ASOS standardization and evaluation instructor. "I've been to a number of ranges and

the 140th Airburst Range guys run the most adaptable range I've ever been to. Rather than a static scenario, we can move around (the) battlefield and are forced to adjust our scenarios as we're provided such realistic targets. It forces the JTAC to practice all the skills he'll really need."

The Airburst Range strives to make the training experience as dynamic as possible.

"We are always changing things to make it a place that really mimics the current fight with vision to the future," said Maj. John Stevenson, Airburst Range commander.

According to Stevenson, what makes this range so versatile is that multiple users perform a variety of functions. In addition to traditional bomb dropping, the range also supports explosive ordnance disposal, small arms training, and three drop zones are used by folks like the Navy SEALs and the 302nd Airlift Wing from Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado.

"We try to combine a variety of functions occurring on the range into our scenarios. For instance, if I've got EOD blowing things up in one area of the range, I'll incorporate IEDs into the scenario that we're running for a user. We really strive for a synergistic effect in our training out here," said Stevenson.

With only 10 enlisted and two officers, the Air National Guardsmen of the Airburst Range make all this happen on 832 acres of Fort Carson Range leased and maintained

by the 140th Wing.

On average, they control flights every day and run about three scenarios a week.

This small group of Air National Guardsmen spend long days together, as well. With the nearest convenience store more than 30 minutes away, the group eats lunch together, travels to and from the range together. Their work schedule is driven by the needs of their customers.

“We spend about 11 hours a day together and there’s hardly a month we don’t work a weekend outside of our normal UTA weekend,” said Master Sgt. Manuel Gomez, 140th OSS Range vehicle maintenance noncommissioned officer in charge.

The group has to get creative sometimes and will split shifts to accommodate a user that needs to train well into the night. “We’ve got multiple customers in every branch of the armed forces, as well as civilian contractors, but the bottom line is, if a customer needs us, we’re going to make sure we’re here and do everything we can to make it valuable training for them,” said Stevenson.

Although the Airburst Range has the traditional Air Force specialties such as vehicle maintenance, supply and communications, they find a system to make it all

140th Airburst Range Commander, Maj. John Stevenson, briefs an observing Army officer about an upcoming training scenario from the Airburst Range Tower.
Air Force photo by Capt. Kristin Haley



work. “We’re a tight-knit unit with a firehouse mentality,” added Stevenson.

Everyone is trained on a variety of range duties to include tower operations, building targets, firefighting, bomb scoring, coordination and scheduling of range users and even heavy equipment operations. “For instance, our admin troop is a heavy equipment operations expert,” said Stevenson. “Also, the guys here have a lot of pride in their range and strive for individual ownership. Certain parts of the range or villages are designated to certain individuals and everyone pitches in as necessary when that person needs help.”

We couldn’t accomplish what we do here if everyone didn’t

help out. You’re really a jack of all trades and other duties as assigned are the key here,” added Gomez.

“I used to work in supply at Buckley and I really love my job here on the range. It has opened up so much for me. We really feel like we’re integral to the warfighter. We see where it all comes together and where the tip of the spear gets sharpened,” said Tech. Sgt. Franco Aguilar, 140th OSS Range Supply technician.



140th Airburst Range Commander, Colorado Air National Guard Maj. John Stevenson, briefs scenario details to exercise participants.
Air Force photo by Capt. Kristin Haley



Legislators

honor those who serve

Military and Veterans Appreciation Day at Colorado State Capitol building

By Spc. Joseph K. VonNida
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

CENTENNIAL, Colo. (1/25/10) – The men and women of the Colorado National Guard were formally recognized for their service and support to community, state and nation during Military and Veterans Appreciation Day at the Colorado State Capitol building in Denver.

Members of the Colorado National Guard, Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Civil Air Patrol and other military organizations from Colorado were present.

Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards, The Adjutant General of Colorado, said, “Thank you Governor Ritter for the support you give and show for our servicemembers and thank you for everyone being here today as we recognize the military in Colorado.

Colorado Army National Guardsman and Purple Heart recipient Sgt. Martin May attended the event with his wife and children as

a representative of his fellow 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery Soldiers who are currently serving in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. May was deployed with the unit when he was wounded by enemy fire.

“Today is not about me,” said May. “I’m representing them by accepting the gratitude from the governor and state. I feel it’s my duty and responsibility to stand up when it’s asked of us, and any other Soldier there would do the same for me. I would still be there if I could.”

Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter, Jr., said, “Today we are here to appreciate the military. God bless you to all who wear the uniform and thank you for the support and service.”

At the conclusion of the reception, Colorado state representatives convened for a formal meeting that, on this rare occasion, dignitaries and special guests were invited to attend.



Colorado Army National Guardsman and Purple Heart recipient Sgt. Martin May speaks with The Adjutant General of Colorado, Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards, and Colorado State Representative Nancy Todd at the Military and Veterans Appreciation Day held Jan. 25 at the Colorado State Capitol building .

Army photo by Spc. Joseph K. VonNida



Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter, Jr., poses for a photo with Fort Carson, Colo., Soldiers following a press conference Jan. 25. Ritter expressed his thanks and gratitude to Colorado servicemembers during the Military and Veterans Appreciation Day at the Colorado State Capitol building.

Army photo by Spc. Joseph K. VonNida

The Colorado National Guard's 101st Army Band and Honor Guard conducted the opening ceremony, which was followed by a prayer from Colorado National Guard State Chaplain Army (Col.) Andy Meverden.

The day's agenda consisted of the consideration of House Joint Resolutions. An HJR is a legislative measure that requires approval by the Senate and the House of the Colorado General Assembly and is presented to the House leadership for approval. These resolutions are the state's way of formally recognizing someone or something.

"A lot of words – a lot of people – a lot of lives ... that we may be free. ... Today what we do is stop and say thank you," said Colorado State Representative Nancy Todd at the first order of business.

Five resolutions were considered, HJR10-1004 through HJR10-1008. While all of them focused on military members, HJR10-1006 focused on the 150th anniversary of the Colorado National Guard. Excerpts from the resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, In January of 1860, the first General Assembly of the Territory of Jefferson met in Denver, passing an act "to authorize the formation of military companies" in the area; and ...

WHEREAS in the 150 years since its inception, the Colorado National Guard has been prepared for and called upon to serve in every major state, national, and international campaign the United States has undertaken; and ...

WHEREAS, In 1953, the Colorado Air National Guard formed the Minute Men, a precision aerial flying demonstration team, who, in 1956 were designated by the National Guard Bureau as the official precision aerial demonstration team of the Air National Guard; and ...


WHEREAS, Since December 2001, the Colorado National Guard has sent 6,000 Soldiers and Airmen to Iraq and Afghanistan in defense of our nation and in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom; and ...

WHEREAS, The Colorado National Guard and its members have selflessly and heroically served their state and their nation for 150 years; now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the Sixty-seventh General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:

That we, the members of the Sixty-seventh General Assembly honor the Colorado National Guard in this, its 150th year of service to the state and country; and

That we salute and appreciate the many generations of men and women who, through their service in the Colorado National Guard, have bravely given their energy and lives to the welfare of all Coloradans and to the protection of the United States and the ideals of peace and democracy for which it stands.

The resolution can be found in its entirety at <http://www.leg.state.co.us>. 

Colorado Military

Celebrating 150 years of service

DENVER (1/23/10) – More than 1,000 Colorado National Guardsmen, families, veterans, other servicemembers and dignitaries celebrated in grand style at a military ball for the ages.

The event marked 150 years of service the Colorado National Guard has provided the community, state and nation.

Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter, Jr., attended the special event and paid his respects for all of the years of service the men and women of the CONG have given.

“I have a great deal of pride in having served as the commander in chief for the last three years,” Ritter said. “I have viewed it as one of the greatest privileges of my life to be able to serve with people like you who are selfless in how you view your own service. ... If I look to the men and women of the Guard, or the men and women who wear the

uniform, and look at that selflessness, I think it’s the place that we as a country need to return to.”

Held at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver, the festivities included live music performed by the 101st Colorado Army National Guard Band. Volunteers wore replica military uniforms spanning the Civil War era to modern day. Several historic military vehicles were displayed outside the ballroom.

Gen. Craig R. McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, was present to celebrate the occasion.

“I am here tonight to briefly say thank you on behalf of my bosses – the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen, and the Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. ... (They told me) ‘Tell the citizens of Colorado, tell the Colorado National Guard how proud they are to think that this great state and its National Guard are celebrating 150



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Story by Air Force Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad
Photos by Army Sgt. Benjamin Crane
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

years of service to state and nation.' So I do that proudly on their behalf."

Retired Colorado Army National Guard Master Sgt. Brian Prohaska presented McKinley a framed print commemorating 150 years of CONG history.

"If you want to know what our future is, all you have to do is look at our past," said Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards, The Adjutant General of Colorado. "We look at our successes in the past and it makes you know absolutely that the future is bright for the United States of America."

His Royal Highness, Lt. Gen. Prince Feisal Bin Al-Hussein, special assistant to the chairman, joint chiefs of staff of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,



turned out for the celebration. The Colorado National Guard was the first state to partner with a Middle Eastern country under the State Partnership Program.

"It was above and beyond what I expected," Col. Dana M. Capozzella, Colorado Army National Guard Commander, said. She also thanked the communities and employers who support Guard members. "I wouldn't be here without the support of my civilian employers and I know none of the Soldiers and Airmen would be without the continued support."

Bill Frueh, a military re-enactor with the Association of Living History, was decked out in a uniform from the 1st and 2nd Colorado Cavalry from the period of 1860-1865. He volunteered to spend his evening answering questions about his uniform and to provide historical insight.


"For these people, I would do anything because they do so much for us," Frueh said. "I feel that we owe a great deal to the military these days and anything I can do to show them a little bit better time tonight is absolutely my honor."

The keynote speaker, Dr. Geoffrey Hunt, author, military historian, and chair of the Department of History and Social Sciences at Aurora Community College in Aurora, Colo., talked about the origins of the Colorado National Guard, which first mustered exactly 150 years to the day – at almost the exact location – as the ball.

"The Guard has served in a lot of conflicts overseas. The Guard, however, has also been called up by the governor to serve its state," said Hunt. "When there's

a crisis, people turn to the Guard. When a plane goes down, Civil Air Patrol has to find them and then it's the Guard that flies in and brings them out. When there's a flood, when there's a tornado, when there's a fire, it's the Guard we turn to first. It's a grand heritage and it's nice to see it recognized with the 150th celebration."

COARNG State Command Sgt. Major Daniel Lousberg, in his dress blues with hash marks representing 33 years of service lined up to his elbows said, "The Colorado National Guard has never failed. Never. It has never failed to deploy in a federal status or at a state status and succeed one hundred percent in whatever it's been asked to do. I tell all of the young folks coming into the Colorado National Guard, when I greet them on their first drill, that they are the calming effect out there when there's a state catastrophe. When the news is telling people to not be on the roads and stay inside when there's a blizzard, they (the National Guard) are the ones who are going outside to rescue their fellow stranded citizens off of the highways. They are the ones out there pulling in the elderly who can't get to the hospitals. This state would be lost without a Colorado National Guard."

From La Glorieta Pass in 1862 when the 1st Colorado Volunteers met and defeated a band of Texas Confederate soldiers, to the hundreds of deployed Colorado Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen fighting the Global War on Terror in the Middle East today, the Colorado National Guard has been serving its state and nation for 150 years. 









Honoring 150 years of service

Chief of National Guard Bureau thanks Colorado Guardsmen, joins in celebration

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

DENVER (1/23/10) – On the day the Colorado National Guard celebrated its 150th birthday, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Gen. Craig R. McKinley, touched on the importance and origins of the National Guard.

“I congratulate General Edwards and his fine team of leadership for this great occasion tonight,” McKinley said in a press conference before the festivities. “I can’t thank the men and women of the National Guard – nationally and here in Colorado – enough for what they do.”

McKinley is the senior uniformed officer in the National Guard and is responsible for formulating, developing and coordinating all policies, programs and

plans affecting more than half a million Air and Army National Guard personnel.

McKinley’s visit was meaningful to the Colorado National Guardsmen, state leadership – and even himself, as the leader spent a portion of his childhood in Colorado.

“From a son of Colorado who lived at 2955 Cherry Ridge Road in Englewood, Colo., I have to tell you, I am proud to be here tonight,” he said.

McKinley also sent a message from his higher command to military ball patrons.

“I am here tonight to briefly say thank you on behalf of my bosses – the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen, and the Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. ... (They told me) ‘Tell the citizens of Colorado,

The Adjutant General of Colorado, Maj.Gen. H. Michael Edwards and retired Colorado Army National Guard Master Sgt. Brian Prohaska, presents Gen. Craig R. McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, a framed print commemorating 150 years of CONG history during the military ball at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver Jan. 23.

Army photo by Sgt. Benjamin Crane



tell the Colorado National Guard how proud they are to think that this great state and its National Guard are celebrating 150 years of service to state and nation.’ So I do that proudly on their behalf.” McKinley also addressed the importance of the National Guard and its origins.


“I carry around a small book called the United States Constitution, and on a night like tonight, it’s not a stretch to read why we exist,” McKinley said. “Because our Founding Fathers – who wrote these great words – wanted us all to remember for posterity, why there is a National Guard. In it, it says, ‘To provide for calling forth the militia, to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions, to provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as maybe employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the state respectively the appointment of the officers and the authority of training militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress.’ So forever it’s written that we shall have a National Guard of the United States and I’m so proud to be with you on your birthday.”

McKinley is the 26th chief of the NGB and is the first National Guard officer ever to achieve the grade of four-star general. He is one of the privileged few who have joined George Washington and Ulysses S. Grant as four-star officers who have served as Guardsmen in their careers.



Gen. Craig R. McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, speaks to attendees at the Colorado National Guard's military ball Jan. 23 in Denver.

Army photo by Sgt. Benjamin Crane

Aside from being the first of his kind in the National Guard, McKinley is an accomplished pilot with more than 4,000 flight hours in eight different aircraft. He directed the Air National Guard before becoming the chief of the NGB. 



Retired Colorado Army National Guard Master Sgt. Brian Prohaska, drew the commemorative lithograph depicting 150 years of Colorado National Guard history.

1. Colorado's Volunteer Cavalry were closely involved in the Indian Wars and did their best to protect the territory from aggressive bands of Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians in the Eastern Plains and the Ute tribe in the Western Slope.

2. The Canon City Prison Riot of 1929 required the assistance of the Colorado National Guard. Eight prison guards were killed while no inmates escaped.

3. Colorado fought victoriously in New Mexico and Missouri campaigns of the American Civil War with Cavalry, Infantry, and Artillery units.

4. The Peabody Medal was awarded by Governor James Peabody to Colorado National Guardsmen for their role in quelling miner strikes in 1903 during his tenure. The Colorado National Guard was constantly called to provide security in many hostile strikes across the state from 1889 to 1922.

5. The World War I Campaign Medal was awarded for service in the Great War. This conflict saw the First Colorado Infantry reorganized as the 157th Infantry, and Colorado's Field Artillerymen fought in all of the major campaigns of the war from 1918 onward.

6. The First Colorado Volunteers were the first Americans to occupy Manila during the Spanish American War and raised the first American flag over the city in 1898. During this invasion, the Coloradans fought so valiantly that they earned the title "Eager for Duty" which remains the regimental motto today for the 157th.

7. Colorado National Guard's first F-16 Fighting Falcons were assigned in September of 1991. Operated by the 120th Fighter Squadron, these F-16s are the preeminent versatile multi-role fighter jet in the state of Colorado.

8. The Air and Army Space units within the Colorado National Guard were the first to stand up around-the-clock space missions that continuously provide early warning, missile intercept, and intelligence capabilities for global security.

9. After sharpening their skills flying the F-86 Sabre in the Korean War, the 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron formed the "Minute Men" which served as the Air National Guard's official precision aerial demonstration team and entertained millions internationally from 1953-1959.

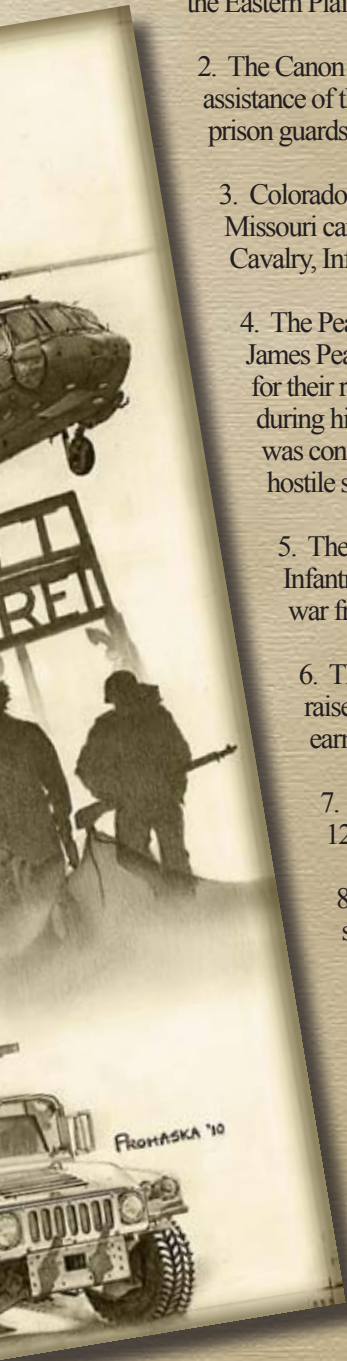
10. Colorado's first Aviation units were attached to Artillery and Signal units. They flew the Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny" as part of the Army Air Corps and were used for reconnaissance, indirect fire observation and aerial photography.

11. Rotary-wing aviation is among the most called upon assets during state emergencies and a crucial element on the battlefield. It is critical in search and rescue missions as well as response to natural disasters. Colorado's Army Aviation units have deployed globally multiple times and the state is home to the premiere helicopter training site in the world.

12. The Distinguished Flying Cross is one of the highest honors involving military aviation. Multiple Colorado National Guardsmen have earned this honor. Sergeant Michael P. Rowan distinguished himself on Nov. 11, 1968 for heroic actions as a medic during the rescue of two downed pilots in hostile territory while serving in Vietnam. More recently, Major Brian "T.A." Patterson earned his medal in 2003 for his immediate re-tasking and combat search and recovery of a downed A-10 pilot in Baghdad, Iraq.

13. "Work Makes You Free" is the English translation of the phrase marking the front gate of the infamous Dachau Nazi Labor Camp in Germany. This camp was liberated by elements of the 3-157th Infantry Regiment of the Colorado National Guard on April 29, 1945. This unit served 511 days consecutively in a combat zone.

14. The M1114 up armored "Humvee" is the vehicle that defines our current fight against terrorism in the Middle East. It is used by all branches of the military because of its maneuverability over multiple types of terrain and superior hauling capacity. Over 6,000 Colorado National Guardsmen have deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom since Sept. 11, 2001.



Colorado Guard

flies professional rodeo champion



Air Force Maj. Marc "Kidd" Garceau, an F-16 fighter pilot with the 120th Fighter Squadron, and Pro Rodeo Cowboys Association rider Josh Peek, pause for a photo prior to Peek's orientation flight, Jan 8; and inset, Peek in the backseat.

Air Force photos by Master Sgt. John Nimmo, Sr.

**By Air Force Capt. Nicole David
140th Wing Public Affairs**

BUCKLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. (1/10/10)—The 140th Wing, Colorado Air National Guard recently gave Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association champion Josh Peek a ride he'll probably not forget — at least for a while.

Peek, a native of Pueblo, Colo., had the opportunity to spend the day here and learn about the ever-increasing importance of the Air National Guard and its role in both domestic and national defense. In addition to learning more about day-to-day operations, Peek's adventure ended with a special National Guard Bureau-approved F-16 orientation flight Jan. 8.

An orientation flight is a part of the Air Force's community outreach efforts. Orientation flights provide Americans who, because of their position and contact with various public organizations, can make positive contributions to public understanding of the roles and missions of the Department of Defense. An F-16 flight provides first-hand opportunities to view the quality and capabilities of American servicemembers and weapons systems.

Ranked second in the PRCA World Standing in tie-down roping, Peek readily admitted the F-16 Fighting Falcon was a ride far different than what he's used to.

"I had a thrilling and exhilarating experience," said Peek as he reflected.

Throughout the day, Peek, accompanied by his family, learned about the Colorado Air National Guard and the commitment it takes to be Citizen-Airmen.

"The Colorado Air Guard is the most respectful family-oriented group of people I have ever met. My family and I were treated with such great hospitality and kindness . . . and in my opinion, are heroes for their sacrifices and dedication to the State of Colorado and the United States," said a grateful Peek.

Jan. 23 marked the 150th anniversary of the Colorado National Guard. In an effort to educate the Denver community about the CONG's missions and heritage, the National Western Stock Show dedicated a ProRodeo performance to the Colorado National Guard. Video footage of Peek's F-16 flight was shown during the event.

The National Western Stock Show is a professional rodeo and horse show. In its 104th year, the NWSS hosted the world's fifth richest regular season professional rodeo, largest horse show and Colorado's largest tradeshow.

"They are prominent members in our community trying to educate folks on their mission, just like the Colorado Guard," said 140th Wing Commander Brig. Gen. Trulan A. Eyre.

The support of various communities, like the ProRodeo circuit, plays a critical role in the defense of the nation, especially for our Colorado Air National Guardsmen who live and work in the Denver area, said Eyre.

"I always thank family members for the huge sacrifices they make for our Guardsmen, but our communities also make huge sacrifices and are equally as important in this support network. It is my hope that this flight will work to further promote understanding of our Colorado National Guard in celebration of its 150th year, as well as our great relationship with the National Western Stock Show," said Eyre. 

★ ★ ★ Stock show honors ★ ★ ★ Colorado National Guard

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

DENVER (1/22/10) – As part of its National Guard Day, The National Western Stock Show honored the Citizen-Soldiers and-Airmen of the Colorado National Guard and helped commemorate its 150th anniversary.

Along with the day's rodeo, Guardsmen were ushered into the arena by stagecoach. Sgt. Jordan Blake, of the Colorado Army National Guard's 193rd Military Police Battalion, sang the national anthem. Also, following the afternoon's final event, nearly 100 Soldiers from her unit marched into the arena.

Along with a COARNG recruiting booth, the National Guard Patriot Chopper was displayed. The Patriot Chopper is a custom built motorcycle designed by four National Guard Soldiers – two of whom are from Colorado.

"I'm a big supporter of the National Guard," Army veteran Troy Kelvins of Lakewood, Colo., said as he dismounted the Patriot Chopper. "As a combat vet myself, of Desert Storm, it means a lot to me that guys are out there putting their lives on the line for us – the citizens of this nation – and for all of you to be out



Soldiers from the 193rd Military Police Battalion salute rodeo attendees in recognition of the support they provide to our military forces.

Air Force photo by Capt. Darin Overstreet

The National Guard Patriot Chopper on display at the Colorado Army National Guard recruiting booth. The motorcycle is one of four of its kind and was designed by four Army National Guardsmen, two of whom were from Colorado.

Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad



here today gives us a chance to thank you for your service.”

Several Colorado Guardsmen participated in the day’s event and turned out in uniform to take in the festivities with their families.

Tech. Sgt. Shannon Blasus, a full-time ordnance technician with the 140th Wing’s Armament shop, said he enjoyed the rodeo and the National Western Stock Show’s honoring of the CONG was much appreciated.

Spc. Randall Orvis of the 193rd MP Battalion and Tech. Sgt. Richard Gibbons of the 140th Civil Engineering Squadron’s Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight, both Purple Heart recipients, were honored with a ride on the back of a late-19th century stagecoach pulled by Clydesdales. In front were Maj. Gen. Michael H. Edwards, The Adjutant General of Colorado, and Brig. Gen. Trulan A. Eyre, 140th Wing commander.

Eyre thanked the men and women of the National Western Stock Show for their support.

“They are providing a day for our family members to enjoy being connected with the community and the old-school western side

of life,” Eyre said. “We certainly appreciate all the support of the National Western Stock Show and we hope that this is a relationship that we continue to grow in the future.”

Also shown was a recent video of Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association champion Josh Peek’s F-16 orientation flight. Peek, a native of Pueblo, Colo., was given a backseat orientation flight in the Colorado Air National Guard fighter jet Jan. 10. As part of the Air Force’s community outreach efforts, orientation flights provide Americans who, because of their position and contact with various public organizations, can make positive contributions to public understanding of the roles and missions of the Department of Defense. An F-16 flight provides first-hand opportunities to view the quality and capabilities of American servicemembers and the power of U.S. weapons systems.

The National Western Stock Show and the Colorado National Guard teamed up to educate the Denver community about the CONG’s missions and heritage. As part of this, following the final rodeo event, patrons were shown a brief video that showcased



Soldiers from the 193rd Military Police Battalion enter the spotlight of a smoke filled arena during a special recognition ceremony at the conclusion of the National Western Stock Show rodeo.

Air Force photo by Capt. Darin Overstreet



Kelli Jackson, Miss Rodeo America presents the flag for the National Anthem at the National Western Stock Show.

Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad

some of the Guard's responsibilities to its community, state and nation. Immediately following, nearly 100 men and women of the 193rd MP Battalion marched into the arena in formation and saluted the crowd – to a standing ovation.

The 193rd is mobilizing for additional training before it heads to Afghanistan for a year-long deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Orvis will be deploying for his second time in three years. He didn't mind the limelight—although he was uncomfortable at first—because it was to honor the CONG's 150th anniversary.

“Events like today are extremely important because they get the word out that the National Guard is a civilian-based first-responder that does a lot. I originally came from the 220th (Military Police Company) and they've been activated for just about everything from the Olympics to fighting forest fires to Hurricane Katrina. We played a vital role in a lot of stateside missions, so it gives you a sense of pride being involved in an organization like this.”



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The Adjutant General of Colorado Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards, takes top honors on a late 19th century stagecoach with Purple Heart recipients Spc. Randall Orvis of the 193rd Military Police Battalion and Tech. Sgt. Richard Gibbons of the 140th Civil Engineering Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Jan. 22.

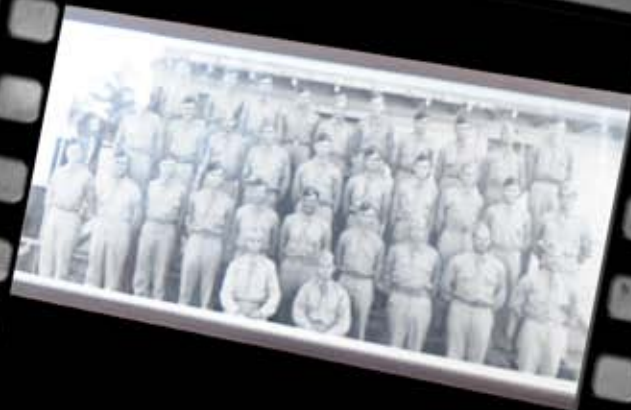
Air Force photo by Capt. Darin Overstreet



Reeling in the years

A chat with one of Colorado's oldest living National Guardsmen reveals a storied career loaded with a century of history





By Air Force Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

Tucked away atop a hill near Bailey, Colo., resides a hero of three wars. And his career began in the Colorado National Guard.

In a fitting way to kick off the CONG's 150th anniversary, 90-year-old Bill Eugene Myers took the time to talk with me about his extensive military career.

He doesn't brag about his exploits in World War II, Korea or Vietnam, but Myers will open up to the right person. Hesitant to talk to civilian media, which he first thought he'd be doing, he agreed to speak to me only after I assured him I was a military journalist.

After I drove for an hour southwest on Highway 285 in a snow storm and got turned around on dirt mountain roads, I came upon Myers' house perched on a knoll with a spectacular view of the Front Range.

The storm that had rolled into Denver had yet to block out the sunshine in Park County and I took in the beautiful view from Myers' porch before I knocked on his front door. I thought this place was as good as any to retire.

Myers stood all of about 5 feet, 8 inches tall and had a

gaunt frame. He answered the door dressed in a flannel shirt, blue jeans held up by a fist-sized belt buckle and cowboy boots – the look of a rancher. He invited me in and I immediately felt as if I'd stepped back in time a couple of generations.

A Johnny Cash song twanged away on the radio, pictures of fighter planes from three eras lined the walls and die-cast models of the same planes were displayed throughout the house. A massive zebra skin pelt hung above the couch. My interest in this man only began to grow as I asked about details of the many historical photos in earnest.

Military beginnings

Turns out, Myers is probably one of the oldest living former Colorado Army National Guardsmen. He joined the COARNG's 168th Field Artillery in Golden, Colo., in 1938. His drill check as a private was \$5 per drill. He used the extra cash as his spending money.

Myers said he had always been interested in the military growing up. After spending a good portion of his childhood on his grandparent's ranch in Bailey, he became fascinated with the cavalry – so off to military school he went. At Randolph-Macon Academy in Front Royal, Va., the young Myers grew to conform and adapt to a highly-structured lifestyle.

"I enjoyed it," Myers said of his military schooling. "It was tough. They don't have them like that anymore. They hazed you and beat you when you were a freshman."

Myers graduated from the academy in 1938 and joined the COARNG that same year while he attended the Colorado School of Mines in Golden.

Within two years, Myers flunked chemistry and was flat broke. He dropped out of school, took a short hiatus from the Guard and worked in a lead, zinc and silver mine in the panhandle of Idaho for six months to get back on his feet financially.

"One day the Guard sent me a letter stating that if I went on active duty with them for a year, they would make me a staff sergeant," Myers recalled. "I was a corporal then, so I went back home."

Myers said an artillery Guardsman's average drill at Camp George West in Golden prior to World War II consisted of drill and ceremony, classes and training on a French 75 mm artillery piece.

"We had just been mechanized," Myers said. "When I joined I thought we were still using horses, but trucks were pulling our artillery. The world was changing."

And it was about to change again in a monumental way.

Plunged into war

Myers' unit was activated in early 1941 and put on orders for a year. The unit convoyed for training to Camp Forest, Tenn., where it was

Air Force Lt. Col. Bill Myers poses in front of an F-86A Sabre at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport in Arizona in 1956. Myers was the air advisor to the Arizona Air National Guard for three years in the mid-1950s. Myers' career spanned 35 years and service in three wars as a fighter pilot. He initially entered the military as an enlisted field artilleryman in the Colorado Army National Guard in 1938.

Photo courtesy Bill Myers



attached to the 7th Army Corps.

It was off base one Sunday afternoon while Myers was on a date when he heard that Pearl Harbor had been bombed and America was now at war.

His regiment was immediately ordered to the Philippines, but due to the extensive amount of transports being sunk on their way to the islands, Myers and his fellow Soldiers ended up at Camp Roberts near Paso Robles, Calif., for a short stint before they were moved up to Camp McQuaid in Monterrey Bay, Calif.

“California thought the invasion was coming,” Myers said. “We were all on alert. There were Cossack posts (American sentries) on every bridge and everything was blacked out at night.”

It was around that time Myers made the switch to the U.S. Army Air Corps. Myers wanted to fly ever since a flower sack was dropped on his truck. He was performing training maneuvers when an airplane on a training bomb run in Louisiana dropped the makeshift bomb the year before. Right then, Myers knew he was on the wrong end of things.

Myers put in his paperwork for a commission and flight school. He thought if he didn’t make it through flight school, he’d end up a gunner or a maintenance troop on a ground crew, which would still be better than the field artillery.

After more than a year of flight school, Myers earned his wings as a single-engine fighter pilot and was commissioned a second lieutenant. It was 1943 and the air war raging over Europe was at its height.

In January 1944, Myers found himself stationed in England flying P-47 Thunderbolts on missions over Western Europe. He was 24-years-old and having the time of his life, he said. His missions consisted of fighter sweeps (strafing and dive-bombing ground targets) and bomber escorts.

“Anything that moved was a target. Period. Anything that moved.” Myers said. “They didn’t have all these restrictions in what you can and can’t hit (like we have) these days.”

Myers said he had three air-to-air kills, 12 air-to-ground, two probables (possibly shot down in the air) and three damaged – all aircraft of some sort. Periodically, Myers and his fellow pilots threw parties to celebrate air victories and blow off some steam from the stressors of constant air combat.

“In those days you were supposed to get a shot of whiskey after every mission,” Myers said. “We did that the first couple days and then realized that was a waste of whiskey. What good’s one shot of whiskey? So we started saving our shots for one big party.”

It was at one of these parties that Myers met his future wife – a 22-year-old Army second lieutenant physiotherapist



Bill Myers shows off his military patch collection spanning 35 years of his career that began in 1938 as an enlisted field artilleryman in the Colorado Army National Guard. Every patch on the wall represents a wing, group, squadron or unit that Myers was either in or associated with for a period of time.

Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad

named Louise. At the time she was dating a higher ranking officer in his company. Myers began to date Louise a few months later, after she treated his wounds following a strafing mission in the Saar Valley in France.

A dance with death

It was late November 1944.

Myers' plane was hit by multiple shells from an anti-aircraft gun mounted on the roof of a German troop train. Shrapnel from the shells tore into Myers' body. His engine caught fire and he knew he would have to bail out. After reaching an altitude of around 2,000 feet, the fire in Myers' P-47 engine extinguished, but oil continued to pour out of it.

"If you lost your oil, you were in deep trouble," Myers said. "I thought I was well over 10 miles behind our lines and finally the oil pressure went to zero, so I started to look for places to belly-in (makeshift land) – because you never bailed out of a P-47 if you could belly-in – because you're apt to get killed real easy (if you bail out)."

With blood spurting from an artery in his wrist and his plane out of oil, Myers crash-landed in a field. American troops found Myers lying next to his plane and told him that he crashed only a couple hundred yards from German lines.

Myers had shrapnel lodged in his neck, chest, left leg, right shoulder, hand – and even between his eyes.

Regardless of his injuries though, he was back in the cockpit within a month.

"I was real lucky," Myers said. "Luck and stupidity took over skill and cunning."

Myers flew 147 combat missions over Europe in World War II, which included sorties for Army Gen. George S. Patton's legendary 3rd Army that was advancing across France.

He came home from the war a decorated hero. But it wouldn't be his last time.

Same tactics, different aircraft, new enemy

After the war, Myers remained on active duty and was stationed at a series of U.S. bases. Along the way, his son Peter, and his daughter Sally, were born.

In 1947, the Army Air Corps became the Air Force while Myers was stationed at Eglin Field in Florida.

"We were sort of glad to be our own outfit," Myers said of the transition. He said there was no big ceremony of any sort inaugurating the new branch and the only thing that changed was the uniforms.

Within the newly-established Air Force, many squadrons transitioned from propeller-driven planes to jets, and Myers became certified on the new P-80 Shooting Star at Pine Castle Air Force Base in San Bernadino, Calif.

"It was quite a jump," Myers said of the new jet. "It took a

In the comfort of his home in Bailey, Colo., Bill Myers holds a photo of himself standing in front of an F-100 Super Sabre at Tuy Hoa, Vietnam, in his right hand and a more recent photo of his grandson standing in front of an F-22 Raptor at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico.

Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad



little longer to take off. The temperature affected it more. ... There were no simulators and there were no two-seaters, so it was kind of like your first solo all over again the first time you flew it.”

In June 1950, North Korean troops crossed the 38th-parallel and invaded South Korea. It didn't take long for Myers to get back into aerial combat. By August he was flying P-51 Mustangs with the 67th Fighter Squadron out of Taegu, Korea.

Myers' missions were primarily ground support operations with low-level bombing and strafing. He said there was always a lot of anti-aircraft fire that he and his pilots had to deal with, and because of this, the rate of downed P-51 fighters in his squadron was greater than that of the P-47s in his old squadron in World War II.

Myers recalled one particular day over the skies of Korea where he had a close call.

“I saw this big haystack that I thought might be hiding something, so I gave it a burst and it blew up right in front of me. I was very low to the ground and I flew right through the fireball. My engine was dead and I punched everything (the tanks and bombs). I switched gas tanks and hit the primer and my engine started running. From there I flew it on home.”

Myers paralleled the tactics used in Korea with those in World War II and said that combat in the air and on the ground were similar, just on a much smaller level.

Myers was promoted to major during his year-and-a-half in the war. He was 31 and had flown 90 combat missions when he left. He saw helicopters for the first time while he was there, as well as the first jets in combat. He also saw, from the air, the aftermath of devastation the Chinese inflicted on an American division during the massive Chinese offensive in the fall of 1951.

“An entire American division was retreating while the Chinese were advancing,” Myers said. “I saw ‘SOS’ stamped out in the snow and all around it were the remains of tanks and equipment. The whole division was wiped out.”

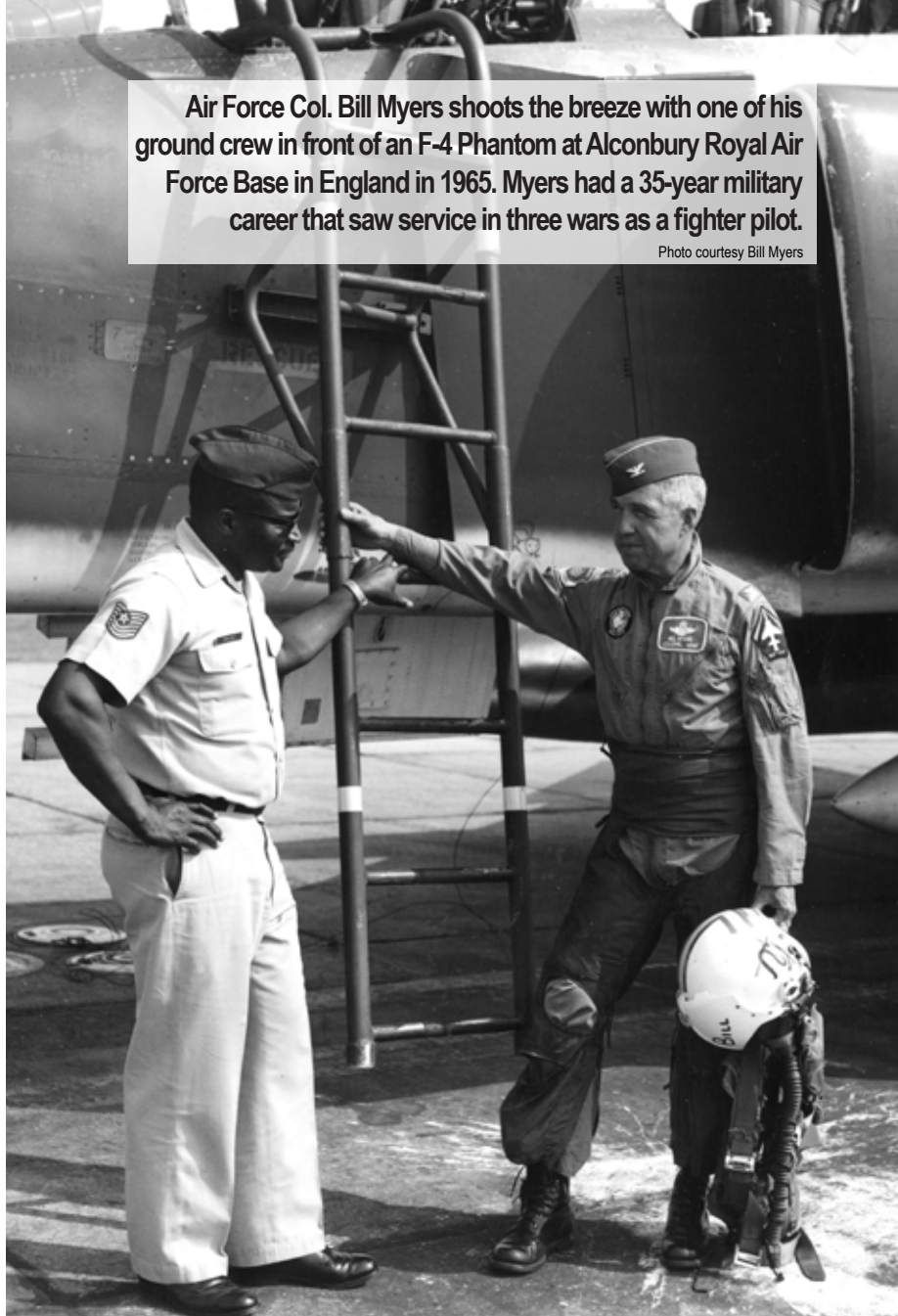
Even though the war was considered a success by Myers' standards, he felt that, unlike World War II, he and his pilots were restricted from inflicting the maximum amount of damage upon the enemy. For example, he wasn't allowed to bomb certain parts of the North Korean infrastructure that he thought to be threats.

He liked Korea, though, and said it was interesting and beautiful from the air.

“There were lots of hilltop fortresses and old Chinese ruins,” Myers said. “I was just glad to be up in the air and not down on the ground slugging it out.”

Air Force Col. Bill Myers shoots the breeze with one of his ground crew in front of an F-4 Phantom at Alconbury Royal Air Force Base in England in 1965. Myers had a 35-year military career that saw service in three wars as a fighter pilot.

Photo courtesy Bill Myers



Upon his return to the U.S., Myers and his wife Louise had their third child, a girl they named Terri, in 1952.

Vietnam: “That was a bad one.”

Based out of Tuy Hoa, Myers was the deputy commander of materiel for the 31st Wing during his year in Vietnam from 1967-68. He was in charge of the Wing's avionics, munitions and field maintenance.

As a colonel, Myers was still flying close air support combat missions in F-100 Super Sabres. If Korea was restrictive, Vietnam was a chokehold.

“You couldn't hit a target until you got permission from the providence chief,” Myers said. “You had to coordinate with the Vietnamese on a lot of targets and you couldn't fly into Laos or Cambodia.”

Overall, Myers was disappointed in the outcome of the war.

“It sure wasn't like World War II or Korea,” Myers said.

“We didn’t lose the war. They (the politicians and American citizens) lost it in the States. That was a bad one.”

Myers rarely saw what he was bombing in Vietnam. He said all he saw after his bombs hit the ground was a bunch of leaves and some smoke. The tree cover was so thick that it concealed targets most of the time. He said the landscape of the country from the air was a triple canopy layer of trees inland, and beautiful beaches along the coast. He didn’t get to see much else of the country as he rarely went off base except for on aerial missions.

Myers flew 100 combat missions during the Vietnam War. It was his last war in a 35-year military career – one that involved piloting 20 different aircraft while stationed at 30 different bases around the world.

Life after the military

Col. Myers retired from the Air Force in 1973 and returned home to Colorado to settle down with his wife, but he didn’t stay long.

Later that year, Myers took a contract position in aircraft quality control for the Royal Saudi Air Force and he and Louise ventured off to Daharan, Saudi Arabia. What he thought was only going to be a two-year position ended up being 10 as he and Louise came to enjoy the country – and pay – immensely.

“It was a land of swift justice, good food and beautiful beaches,” Myers said of Saudi Arabia.

He retired from all work completely in 1983 and now enjoys reading books – mainly history – and riding horses.

“When you retire, you have no more weekends,” Myers said. “It’s all one long weekend from there on out.”

Myers paused momentarily and lit up his corncob pipe while a Hank Williams song played faintly on the radio. The snow storm had made its way into the area and the once beautiful view from Myers’ living room window was now nothing but a grey mass of clouds.

Not a good day for flying, I thought.

What was it about flying that Myers loved so much to do it for more than 30 years?

“It was exciting,” he said. “You think of nothing else but flying when you are in the air in a fighter. It’s total focus when you’re in the cockpit or you’re dead. When I was a little kid, I wanted to be like my granddad and raise horses, but (as) soon as I started flying, I knew that was what I wanted to do over and above the rest.”

I took one more gander around Myers’ living room – at all of his pictures of high adventure in flight, at the many books on aviation and military history – and then I glanced back at Myers and realized that, for the past four hours, I’d been speaking to a living legend.

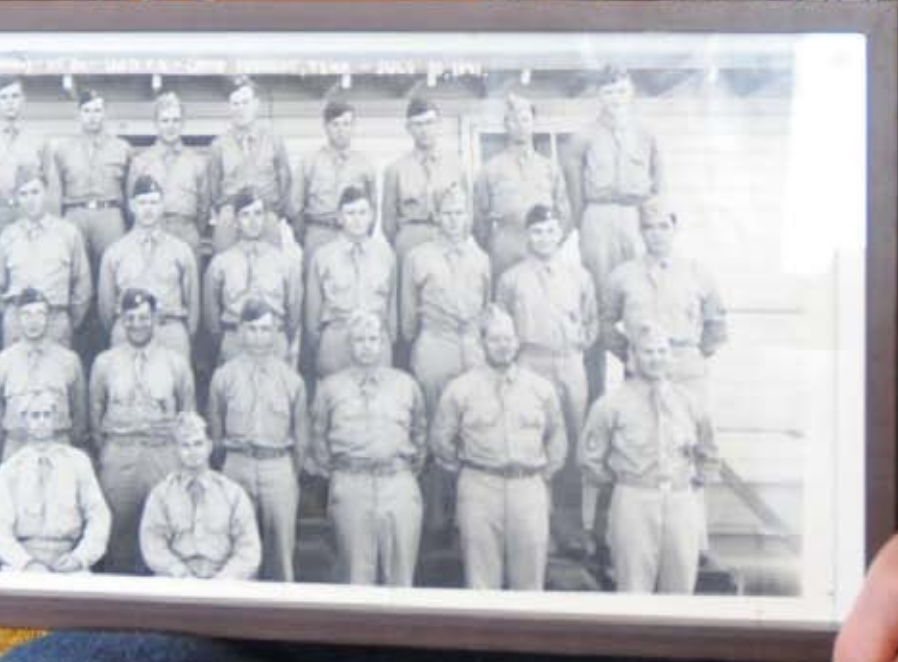
A legend who got his start right here in the Colorado National Guard.



Bill Myers holds the photo of his original unit: the 168th Service Battery, Colorado Army National Guard, out of Camp George West in Golden, Colo. Myers had a 35-year military career that saw service in three wars as a fighter pilot in the U.S. Army Air Corps, and later, the Air Force.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad





Colorado Guardsmen set another new standard

By Army Capt. Adam Morgan
Colorado National Guard Historian

Colorado Air National Guard Maj. Walt “Redeye” Williams observed a locally-sanctioned aerial demonstration team at Williams Air Force Base in Arizona during Lockheed F-80 Shooting Star flight training and said in a 1988 interview for “Colorado Pride – A Commemorative History of the Colorado Air National Guard 1923-1988” that it was “one of the greatest things I have ever seen.”

He returned to Colorado motivated to start a team, but his efforts were slowed by the Korean War. After a year and a half of flying F-86 Saber jet combat

missions over the Korean Peninsula, a newly promoted Lt. Col. Williams returned to prove his proficiency with different aircraft by transitioning the Colorado Air National Guard from P-51 Mustangs to the new F-80 Shooting Stars.

Jerry Bowling, the unofficial historian of the Minute Men, describes the birth of the COANG’s aerial demonstration team:

“On a beautiful afternoon in the skies over Eastern Colorado in the fall of 1953, Walt William’s vision for an aerial demonstration team for the COANG

Minute Men Ranger “Arch” Curran, Walt “Redeye” Williams, John Ferrier and Bob Cherry practice their flight formations prior to an air show.

Photo courtesy Colorado National Guard archives





Minute Men Winett "Wynn" Coomer, John Ferrier, Robert "Bo" Odle, Bob Cherry and Walt "Redeye" Williams stop just long enough for a group photo while preparing for one of their many popular performances.

Photo courtesy Colorado National Guard archives

became a reality.

"Walt, along with Majors Ranger 'Arch' Curran, Warren P. 'Satch' Harvey and 2nd Lt. Dick Heuholt took four of the COANG's new F-80 Shooting Stars up for some formation flying.


"After spending the afternoon practicing steep and tight diamond formation turns, rolls and loops, it was the Minute Men who landed back at Buckley."

Three years later, the National Guard Bureau established the Colorado Air National Guard's Minute Men as the official aerial demonstration team of the Air National Guard. A mere 10 years after the COANG became a unit, the team had emerged as the standard for coordinated flying excellence.

This took a lot of help from "Friends in High Places," a term of endearment ascribed to a group of philanthropists and activists who assisted in the funding of, and advocating for, the Minute Men to keep their status. In addition to the official sanctioning and ample funding from the Friends in High Places, well known leaders in Colorado aviation such as Stanford Gregory, Joe Moffitt and Walt Williams added legitimacy to the Minute Men.

The efforts of these individuals were paramount to the rapid growth of the Colorado Air National Guard, which was barely six years old when the Minute Men were formed. The popularity of the Minute Men encouraged enlistment into the COANG and as a result, the 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron was fully manned and equipped. It was the first Air National Guard unit to deploy as whole to Vietnam.

However, the history of the Minute Men had its share of tragedy. On June 7, 1958, Minute Men Capt. John T. Ferrier entered his F-86 Sabre and took off for a performance for West Point cadets. While flying over a residential area, his jet malfunctioned during a dive. Narrowly missing several houses by the time of impact, he maintained his aircraft to the end. Ferrier, who was posthumously awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross, left behind a wife and three young children.

The Minute Men were eventually disbanded in 1959, to the disappointment of many who had taken a great deal of pride in the state's aerial team. For six years the Minute Men performed hundreds of shows all over the world – not bad for a brand new unit in a brand new branch. 

Crossing the line

Newest leaders honored in ceremony

By Army Pvt. Zach Sheely
104th Public Affairs Detachment

Time-honored. Dedicated. Professional. Leader.

These prevalent words echoed throughout the Army Aviation Support Facility as Colorado National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 135th General Support Aviation, appointed 17 newly-promoted E-5 and E-6 Soldiers into the noncommissioned officer corps Jan. 10 at Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora, Colo.

The NCO Creed, created in 1973, defines an NCO as the "backbone" of the Army and a true professional.

"Transitioning from a junior enlisted Soldier to an NCO is a big step," said Company A 1st Sgt. David Marc Shields.

Being an NCO means transforming from a subordinate troop to a leader of Soldiers and preparing junior enlisted men and women to step up and become leaders in the NCO corps themselves, he said.

"This is a time-honored tradition," Shields said "It's something we haven't done in a while and we are happy to give these new NCOs their due."

A line of duct tape stretched across the ground, separating the senior members of the Colorado

The newly-promoted noncommissioned officers of Colorado Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 135th General Support Aviation, recite the NCO Creed Jan. 10.

Army photo by Pfc. J. Flint





Sgt. Ryan Osadchuk, a UH-60 Blackhawk crew chief is among the newly-promoted noncommissioned officers of the Colorado Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 135th General Support Aviation. He is congratulated and welcomed to the NCO corps by the official party at the unit's NCO induction ceremony Jan. 10.

Army photo by Pfc. J. Flint

National Guard NCO corps from the Soldiers being inducted into their ranks.

After raising their right hands and following the senior NCO's lead in reciting the NCO Creed, each of the newly promoted Soldiers was called individually to be welcomed by the senior members. Each had to step over the line of tape. Crossing the line signified crossing over from a junior enlisted status and becoming an answerable, experienced leader.


NCOs are responsible for motivating and instilling order and discipline into their troops, and, based on their experience and training, are held to a higher standard than junior enlisted Soldiers.

"It's about leading Soldiers, taking care of their needs and making sure they are mentally and physically ready to accomplish the mission," said Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Alflen. "These new NCOs will now be held to a different standard of excellence. They have been taught along the way to do the right thing when no one is looking, and will be expected to pass that on to their Soldiers."

"I want to take care of my Soldiers and lead the way. I want to retire with the National

Guard, and my commitment is to do as the NCO Creed says," said Staff Sgt. Erica Schaeffer.

Instilling discipline is a natural role of a leader. As these new NCOs embrace their role, and prepare their Soldiers for the demands of the mission, discipline was high on the mind of others in the ceremony.

When asked if she had anything to add about her new appointment into the NCO corps, Sgt. Ashley Voss said, "Do pushups." 

Sgt. Ashley Voss receives a plaque from Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Alflen during her unit's noncommissioned officer induction ceremony Jan. 10.

Army photo by Pfc. J. Flint

